

Andrew Jackson to John Coffee, October 7, 1813, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO JOHN COFFEE.1

1 Copy.

Camp Blount 2 October 7 1813 9 Oclk at night

2 Near Fayetteville, Tenn., eighty miles from Nashville. Thirty-five miles further south is Huntsville, Alabama, and fifteen miles south of that was Ditto's Landing on the Tennessee River. At the time Huntsville was the outpost of settlements.

Sir: I arrived at this place, this evening, about 4 Oclk, in good health and beter spirits. It is surely high gratification to learn that the Creeks are so attentive to my situation, as to save me the pain of traveling: I must not be outdone in politeness, and will therefore endeavour to meet them on the middle ground. I lament that on my arrival here, I did not find either so many men as I had expected, or them so well equipped. This evil however I shall endeavour to remedy as speedily as practicable; and in a few days I hope to realise my wishes.

I cannot believe that the Creeks have, at this time, any serious intention of an attack upon our frontiers; and yet I would not have you entirely disregard the information you have received. But whether they have such an intention or not, it seems to me that a rapid movement, into their own country, will be the most effectual means of discomfiting their measures. So soon as I can organise a force sufficient for the undertaking, and procure the necessary supplies, I shall certainly commence it. Your co-operation will then be indispensably necessary; and for that reason I wish you to occupy some eligible position in

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the quarter where you now are, until you receive further orders from me. In the meantime I wish you to receive , and to treat with great kindness, all such spies from the Creek nation as may offer you any communication. Let them not be discharged until my arrival. We must have the truth; and whilst *that* shall be duly rewarded, false information must be severely punished. I shall move from this place to Ditto's landing; but *when* , I really have it not in my power to inform you. I agree with you however entirely that the sooner I can be there the better.

By advices this moment received from Capt Strother (dated Lowry's 5th. Oct) it appears that the enemy are in force at three points, the lowest of which is at the Hickory ground,³ where they have erected a fort; and that *that* portion of them destined against us amount to about 3000. The whole force at Hickory ground is stated to be 4000, which is their principal reliance. Having become tired of waiting our approach, it is said they have commenced moving up their country with an intention of attacking the Freindly towns, at Coweta.

3 Near the junction of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers. Tradition said that the Creeks held the place sacred to their race and believed that no white man could tread the ground and live.

In order to make a distinction between our freinds and our enemies it is arranged by Capt Strother with the Cherokees, that our freinds shall wear white plumes in their hair, or Deer's tails. Altho the letter from Strother would seem to confirm the reports which you have received, yet it has not altered my opinion as to the course to be pursued. Be good enough to send to me here, all such men as may apply to you to be received. I should prefer them as Infantry; but in some capacity or other I must have them. At any event let them come and see me. You will appoint Majr. Shaw adjutant of the mounted Riflemen.